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For Immediate Release

UBC & SFU students pitch social ventures to top entrepreneurs for seed funding

(Vancouver) November 11, 2011 – Ashoka Canada, in partnership with the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, will find the top student changemakers at the end of this month. The two schools co-launched the Be A Changemaker Challenge, powered by Starbucks, to find the best student-led social initiatives coming out of Vancouver. The components of the Challenge are a bootcamp, which took place at SFU on Oct. 1st and a venture pitch selection panel, which will take place at UBC on Nov. 23rd.

On Oct. 1st, about 70 students attended the Be A Changemaker Bootcamp, delivered by Ashoka Canada and Ashoka's Youth Venture and powered by Starbucks, UBC and SFU. The student changemakers gathered for this daylong training to learn how to build and fund their sustainable social ventures that they will subsequently launch, lead, and implement in their communities.

UBC and SFU student changemakers submitted their social venture action plans last week and after careful screening, representatives of Ashoka, UBC and SFU chose the following 10 teams of finalists (in no particular order): Polite No Longer - David Cameron, Paulina Lipska, Ekat Dovjenko (UBC), Home Daycare - Rolando Fuentes Ruiz, Dickson Wong, Stanley Lai (SFU), Home for the Heart - Jessica Fan, Tracy Wei, Kenneth Lau, Peter Gao (SFU), Aspire - Alice Chen, Robbie Hsieh (SFU), Healthy Homes - Kelvin Kwok, Samantha Paulson, Money Gill (SFU), Fusion Kitchen - Chantelle Buffie, Sonam Swarup (SFU), Green Dirt - Adam Wizinsky, Alexis Dalzell, Alee Furman (SFU), Abee Project - Qudsia Ahmed, Jessica Kwee, Jasmin Bhandal (SFU), SFU Bags for Kolkata Women's Empowerment - Lindsay Belvedere, Christine Lukac, Martyna Purchla, Silvia Mora, Alex Hayer, Bar Lianado (SFU) and Nyumbani Social Enterprises - Matt Whiteman and team (UBC)

The finalists will pitch their ideas at the selection panel on Nov. 23rd and have the chance to win \$1,000 of seed funding to launch their ventures. Up to 10 teams will be eligible for up to \$1,000 each in seed funding to launch their social ventures, in addition to incubation support through Ashoka Canada and Ashoka's Youth Venture.

The Be a Changemaker Challenge Selection Panel will bring together six business and social entrepreneurs who will select the winners. **Panelists include: James Tansey (ISIS, Sauder School of Business, UBC), Tom Lawrence (Beedie School of Business, SFU), John Nicola (Nicola Wealth Management & Ashoka Support Network Member), Shannon Vanderwoerd (Starbucks Canada), Elisha Muskat (Ashoka Canada) and Ashoka Fellow John Richardson (Party X, Pivot Legal Society).**

WHAT: The Be A Changemaker Challenge

WHEN: November 23, 2011 - Panel: 6-8 p.m. and Networking & Winners Announced: 8-9 p.m.

WHERE: Robson Square, Theatre (C300), 800 Robson Street, Vancouver

RSVP: <http://beachangemakerpanel.eventbrite.com>

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Be a Changemaker Challenge - Overview

This exciting opportunity is delivered by Ashoka Canada and Ashoka's Youth Venture, hosted by University of British Columbia (UBC) & Simon Fraser University (SFU) and powered by Starbucks, with the vision to enhance the social entrepreneurship experiences of all students.

This challenge consists of:

- University-wide call to action across the SFU & UBC campuses for students to create, launch and sustain social ventures.
- Action plan development by students with resources such as, a user-driven online learning platform, staff support, and mentorship.
- Selection of up to 10 teams for the seed funding of \$1,000 at the Be a Changemaker Challenge Panel
- Ongoing post-launch support and fellowship for students' social ventures as well as changemaker skills development and leadership with a global movement of 100,000+ Changemakers in the global Youth Venture network

About Ashoka's Youth Venture

Ashoka's Youth Venture® leads an international community of young people who are powerful now, changemakers now. Ashoka's Youth Venture inspires and invests in teams of young people to create and launch their own sustainable, community-benefiting Ventures. Ashoka's Youth Venture then connects them into a global movement of young changemakers who are together redefining the youth years as a time of leadership and positive social change. This is the foundation of an Everyone a Changemaker™ world – the key factor for success in every part of society. Ashoka's Youth Venture currently operates in 17 countries and online at www.GenV.net

About Ashoka

Ashoka is the global association of the world's leading social entrepreneurs – individuals with system-changing solutions for the world's most urgent social problems. We are redefining the global citizen sector by creating a system of collaborative entrepreneurship. Connecting the work of individual social entrepreneurs to business, academic and public sector partners, we create a network effect driving the sector forward and developing new solutions to global problems.

To date, we have elected more than 2,700 social entrepreneurs as Ashoka Fellows, in 72 countries in five continents. Across Canada, we have elected 40 Fellows since 2002. By working with our network, we have identified the key principles of transformation. We are working with business entrepreneurs, corporations, government agencies and universities to create a new reality. For more information, visit www.canada.ashoka.org

For more information please contact:

Claudia De Simone
Ashoka Canada
Program Director
Venture, Fellowship and University Partnerships
416-646-2333
cdesimone@ashoka.org